

## Who does (not) belong to the jihadis' umma? A comparison of IS's and al Qaida's use of takfir to exclude people from the Muslim community.

**Christina Hartmann<sup>a1</sup>**

<sup>a</sup>PhD Student, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg

### **Abstract**

Since the declaration of the caliphate in mid-2014, the so-called "Islamic State" (IS) has been preoccupying the media as well as experts and scientists. Thereby, the organisation is often described as succeeding al Qaida as the most important and most dangerous salafi jihadi terror group. Despite the two groups being commonly referred to as salafi jihadi and fighting for supremacy in the jihadi landscape, they differ in terms of ideology and creed ('aḳīda), as well as their way of fighting a jihad (manḥadjj). The purpose of my paper is to highlight the differing ideologies of the two organisations regarding their excommunication of (Sunni) Muslims (takfir) by analysing jihadi sources. The Islamic State uses the concept of excommunication (takfir) to legitimise violence against four categories of Sunnis: (1) Muslim rulers, who do not rule according to the sharia; (2) Islamist parties that take part in democratic elections; (3) Muslim rebels questioning the authority of a ruler; and (4) other jihadis who come to the defence of Sunnis who are declared apostates by IS. Whereas al Qaida agrees in the excommunication of the first two categories, it heavily criticises IS for excluding the third and fourth categories of people from the Islamic society (umma), accuses IS of leaning towards extremism (ghulū) and provoking a division of the society (fitna). Analysing IS's extensive use of excommunication of Sunni opponents and al Qaida's criticism of it, I derive the conclusion that the two organisations differ in their definition of who belongs to the Muslim society (umma) and thus is to be protected. This means that IS does not succeed al Qaida but takes an even more extremist orientation.

### **Article History**

Received Oct 17, 2017

Accepted Dec 10, 2017

Published Dec 29, 2017

**Keywords:** Jihadism, al Qaida, Islamic State, takfir

### **Introduction**

Since the so-called Islamic State (IS) proclaimed its caliphate in mid-2014, people from across the world have been attracted by the organisation and keen to join what they

---

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author Contact: Christina Hartmann, Email: [Christina.Hartmann@fau.de](mailto:Christina.Hartmann@fau.de) University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Institute for Political Science, Middle East Politics and Society; Kochstr. 4, 91054 Erlangen, Germany

perceive as a true Islamic State. Not only have a large proportion of local Sunni populations in Iraq and Syria joined the organisation; moreover, according to estimates of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR), over 20,000 foreign fighters – approximately 4,000 of them Westerners – have made their way to IS-controlled territory since the proclamation of the caliphate (Neumann, 2015). Trying to stop their nationals from leaving for Iraq and Syria, Western governments are now starting to implement various prevention programs. By including former IS members in such programs, governments and non-governmental organisations aim to reveal the brutality and extreme methods used by IS against their opponents, including people from the Sunni creed (International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism, 2017).

Surprisingly, it is not only Western organisations that criticise the cruelty and violence of IS. Furthermore, another organisation is trying to stop Sunnis from joining IS by accusing it of being an extremist organisation, namely al Qaida. The once-leading jihadist organisation cut ties with its former affiliate in February 2014, accusing it of a wrong creed (*‘akīda*) and way of dealing with opponents (*manhadj*) (Tanzīm kā‘ida al-djihād., 2014).

By outlining the discourse about the concept of *takfīr* between IS and al Qaida, the purpose of this paper is to highlight the different ideologies of the organisations and eventually demonstrate that the two organisations have differing concepts of what constitutes the Islamic *umma*. While most studies focus on the structural differences between al Qaida and IS, this paper aims to shed light on the theological differences between the organisations. By taking into account not only *takfīr* of the ruling elites but also *takfīr* between IS and al Qaida, I want to produce a more complete understanding of the ideological differences between the organisations, the people they claim to represent and thus their respective target groups. After providing a background to the evolution of IS from a local al Qaida affiliate to its split with the organisation, the concept of *takfīr* is briefly explained. The paper then traces the use of *takfīr* by IS to justify its violence against objectors as well as al Qaida’s criticism of IS’s extensive use of the concept. Finally, the two different approaches are compared to gain a

---

deeper understanding of the two organisations' inclusion (respectively exclusion) of people from – and thus their definition of – the *umma*.

### Methodology

Based on a social constructivist approach and the assumption that reality is constructed through discourses and social interactions, this paper concentrates on the process of the jihadi construction of reality by conducting a critical discourse analysis (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p. 25). Units of analysis are speeches and statements of the leadership of al Qaida and the Islamic State (as well as its precursors) from the foundation of al Qaida in Iraq (AQI) in October 2004 until the fall of the former IS strongholds Mosul and Raqqa in 2017. The speeches are analysed regarding the ideology (*'akīda*) and practice (*manhadj*) of *takfīr* and the way in which the discourse about *takfīr* is used by the organisations in their attempt to (re)gain the power of interpretation of jihadi concepts and thus supremacy of the movement. Overall, over 120 speeches were examined.<sup>2</sup>

### From Tawhīd wa-l-Djihād to the Islamic State

Abu Musab al Zarqawi – founder of IS's predecessor *Tawhīd wa-l-Djihād* – left his home country Jordan in the 1980s to fight the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, like many others at this time. Despite receiving 200,000 US Dollars from al Qaida for a training camp near Herat, Zarqawi was only loosely affiliated with the organisation and did not give an oath of fealty (*bay'a*) to al Qaida leader Usama Bin Laden (Bunzel, 2015, p. 13). After the US invasion in Afghanistan, Zarqawi fled to Iraq, where he – within the context of the Iraqi insurgency – further developed his organisation and ideology. At that time, the group targeted three types of enemies: the Jordanian and other nominal Muslim regimes that it considers un-

---

<sup>2</sup> Where applicable, in this paper English translations of the speeches – which are mostly distributed as audio files – are quoted. The translations are provided by official jihadi media departments or supporters of the groups.

Islamic; the international community dominated by the West, which in Zarqawi's view is oppressing Islam; as well as members of the Shi'i confession of Islam, whom Zarqawi regards as polytheists (Lister, 2014, p. 7). These targets considerably differ from those of al Qaida. Even though Bin Laden criticises Muslim rulers and Shiites, he wants his organisation to focus on the so-called far enemy, namely the US.

Despite ideological differences, Zarqawi finally pledged allegiance to Bin Laden in September 2004 (Tawhīd wa-l-djihad, 2004). With Bin Laden accepting Zarqawi's *bay'a*, his group subsequently became an official al Qaida affiliate, known as al Qaida in Iraq (AQI). By becoming an official affiliate, Zarqawi gains access to financial resources and al Qaida's recruiting structures and training cooperation (Nelson, Sanderson, Bagia, Bodurian & Gordon, 2011, p. 10). "The al-Qaeda leader's hesitations about his field commander's arrogance and sectarianism were sacrificed to the morale-building blows the latter was delivering to the world's greatest far enemy" (Weiss & Hassan, 2015, p. 35). In addition, al Qaida is able to take roots in one of the most central Muslim countries. Terrorism researcher Zelin (2014, p. 2) thus accurately describes the merger as a "marriage of convenience".

Following the US invasion in Iraq, Zarqawi's tendencies to exploit the political situation and target the Shi'i majority have grown stronger. With the occupation, the existing constitution of the country is suspended and a new constitution is implemented, which has "emphasised differences and divisive issues rather than focusing on the uniting elements of Iraqi society" (Jawad, 2013, p. 5). The implementation of a democratic election system also leads to an expansion of power of the Shi'i population, which makes up 60% of the Iraqi population, whereas power is restrained for the 20% Iraqi Sunnis who had excessive political power under the Saddam regime. In addition to the loss of political weight, several thousand Sunni men were suddenly without work and perspective when the US civil administration dissolved the Iraqi army and the Baath party (Steinberg, 2015, p. 43).

Zarqawi is able to exploit this discontent of the Sunni population and blames the Iraqi government for favouring Shi'is over Sunnis. According to him, the Shia would be more dangerous than the US and have to be fought first (Zarqawi, u.d.), an approach that clearly

---

contradicts Bin Laden's focus on the US as a prior enemy. By contrast, Zarqawi wants to lead Shi'is into a civil war until they submit to Sunnis (Wichmann, 2014, p. 272).

This strategy is heavily criticised by al Qaida, whose leadership reminds Zarqawi of the importance that the broader Sunni population approves of the mujahidin's strategy. The movement should "avoid any action that the masses do not understand or approve [...] as long as there are other options to resort to" (Zawahiri, 2005). Despite claiming that Shiism was a "religious school based on excess and falsehood", Zawahiri (2005) – at the time Bin Laden's deputy and the current leader of al Qaida – excuses the Shi'i's wrong creed (*'akīda*) with them not knowing better. The organisation's leaders advise Zarqawi to strengthen the reputation of his movement by avoiding alienating the broader Sunni population in Iraq.

In 2006, Zarqawi indeed tried to strengthen its reputation, albeit not by ending violence against Shi'i targets, but rather by trying to make AQI more Iraqi after the organisation faced criticism for comprising too many foreigners. In January 2006, AQI – together with five other jihadi groups – formed the *madjlis shūrā al-mudjāhidīn* to improve the coordination against the unbelievers (Madjlis *shūrā al-mudjāhidīn*, 2006). Despite the leadership of the council going to the Iraqi Abu Omer al Baghdadi, AQI still has central control over the operations of the council (Weiss & Hassan, 2015, p. 49). After Zarqawi's death, his successor Abu Hamza al Masri – who did not pledge alliance to Bin Laden – declared the foundation of the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI) in Sunni territories in October 2006 (Steinberg, 2015, p. 59). It is worth noticing that ISI did not control any territory at this time. "Like the MSC [*Madjlis shūrā* Council] the ISI was designed to put an Iraqi face to al-Qaida's efforts in the insurgency" (Fishman & Felter, 2007, p. 5). In the following years, the declaration of a state did not have any real consequences. A main reason for this is the formation of the *ṣahwa* movement, which includes many influential Sunni tribal leaders who join the US in fighting jihadis in Iraq. Consequently, ISI – which counted as many as 10,000 fighters in 2006 – shrunk to a group of approximately 1,000-2,000 in 2010 (Steinberg, 2015, p. 69).

---

Following the US withdrawal from Iraq in 2009, ISI could regain some of its strengths and was able to build administrative structures in some Iraqi provinces and free several hundred former jihadis from Iraqi prisons (al Furqan Media, 2012). In 2010, after Abu Omer al Baghdadi was killed by an US airstrike, he was succeeded by Abu Bakr al Baghdadi, the current caliph of IS. He is not only claimed to have a religious education and be from the tribe of the Quraysh (a prerequisite for being a caliph), but has also spent some time in Camp Bucca, a US prison that is currently seen as a ‘school of terror’. Stern and Berger (2015, p. 38) assume that at least eight members of the ISI leadership were prisoners of Camp Bucca. At the end of 2011, the organisation was so strong that Baghdadi sent one of the regional ISI leaders – Syrian national Abu Muhammad al Jaulani – to Syria to build a jihadi network there. After the outbreak of the revolution in 2011, the country fell into civil war and functioned as a gateway for fighters on their way to Iraq (Lister, 2014). Additionally, following a general amnesty in May 2011, many experienced jihadis were freed from Syrian prisons (Weiss & Hassan, 2015) and joined Jaulani’s group Nusra Front (*djabhat an nuṣra*). The group was soon able to gain the support of the local population and initially positioned itself as an independent organisation from ISI and al Qaida (Stern & Berger, 2015, p. 41). In contrast to ISI – which initiated the foundation of the Nusra Front – targets of the organisation are mainly forces of the Syrian regime, not members of the Shi’i population. With this strategy, Jaulani follows Zawahiri’s guidelines for Jihad, in which he only legitimises violence against Shi’is in the case that they attacked the mujahedeen first (Zawahiri, 2013a).

Presumably due to Nusra’s good reputation in Syria, in April 2013 Baghdadi (2013b) declared the merger of his organisation with Nusra and thus ISI’s expansion to Syria. He renamed the organisation as ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Sham). Just one day later, Jaulani declared his organisation to be independent of ISIS and pledged allegiance to Zawahiri (Bunzel, 2015, p. 25). As a result, fighting between members of the two organisations unfolded in Syria. This prompted the al Qaida leadership to intervene and request the dissolution of ISIS (Zawahiri, 2013b). Baghdadi (2013b) refused to limit his area of operation to Iraq and declared the further existence of ISIS. Finally, the discrepancies between the

organisations and ISIS's rejection of submission under Zawahiri's rule prompted the latter to cut ties with its former affiliate and declare that al Qaida is not responsible for ISIS's actions (Tanzīm kā'ida al-djīhād, 2014). Just a few month later, ISIS renamed itself as IS and proclaimed the caliphate. The global jihad movement became divided and the two organisations fought for supremacy of the jihadi movement.

### The Use of Takfīr by the Islamic State

Whereas IS welcomes Sunnis of all different nationalities to their organisation, it takes extreme action against anyone who is unwilling to subordinate to its rule. It not only persecutes Western forces in the area, members of the Iraqi and Syrian regimes, Christians and other minorities in the region; moreover, it also uses violence against Sunnis who object their caliphate. In order to justify their violent approach towards Sunnis, IS uses *takfīr*, an Islamic concept that denotes the act of excommunication of a nominal Muslim.

#### *Definition of takfīr*

*Takfīr* is a legal concept in Islam to exclude someone from the community of believers, the Islamic *umma*. Thereby, an action, a person or a whole group of people can be declared unbelievers (Hunwick, 1999; Lewis, 2002, p. 142ff.). In jihadi discourse, *takfīr* is mainly used for actions that are seen as major unbelief (*kufīr akbār*), polytheism (*shirk*) or apostasy (*ridā*). Under some circumstances, the consequence of *takfīr* is not only punishment in the afterlife (*ākhirā*), but can also mean that a person can be legitimately killed and their property can be confiscated in this life (*dunyā*). Due to the severe consequences of declaring someone as an unbeliever (*kāfir*), *takfīr* of a specific individual can only be pronounced by religious scholars. As Hegghammer (2009) highlights, there has never been a consensus of the circumstances under which someone can be declared an unbeliever. In addition, not only the circumstances or prerequisites for *takfīr* are debated, but also the consequences of declaring someone an unbeliever. Depending on the circumstances and the priorities of jihad, scholars

do not always suggest the death penalty as the appropriate consequence of *takfīr*. This obscurity is reflected in the current debate of jihadists.

Reflecting on former scholarly work and referring to the *salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ* – the first three generations after the prophet Muhammad<sup>3</sup> – IS uses *takfīr* against four groups of people: Muslim rulers, who do not rule according to the sharia; Islamist parties that take part in democratic elections; Muslim rebels questioning the authority of a ruler; and other jihadists coming to the defence of Sunnis who are declared apostates by IS.

### *Takfīr against Muslim rulers*

The first group of people who are declared unbelievers by IS are Muslim (Sunni) rulers who do not rule according to the sharia. Islam is seen by the organisation as an all-encompassing system (*nizām*) that does not differentiate between political and private spheres. Islam as a system regulates not only the private life, but also politics and society as a whole, as a system of life (*nizām al-hayāt*) (Hartung, 2013, p. 101). In order to declare today's rulers of the Muslim world unbelievers, like other Islamist organisations before it IS refers – inter alia – to the medieval scholar Ibn Taymiyyah. According to him, rebellion or jihad against a Muslim ruler or imam can only be justified in Islamic law if the ruler violates the fundamental obligations of a Muslim. In order to support a rebellion against the rulers of his time, Mongols who converted to Islam, Ibn Taymiyyah declared ruling with law based on the sharia as fundamental part of being a Muslim. Because the Mongols introduced their own legal system that was not based on the sharia, Ibn Taymiyyah stated that they were acting in breach of the fundamental principles of a Muslim and thus could be declared unbelievers (*kuffār*) by him (Baehr, 2009, p. 22). It is the same approach that al Qaida and other local jihadist groups use to excommunicate the rulers of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries and

---

<sup>3</sup> For an in-depth discussion of the definition “generation” and the period covered by the first three generations, see Nezda (2014, p. 96 et sqq).



that also IS uses to excommunicate these rulers. For IS, only a state governed completely and without any exceptions by the sharia is an Islamic one, as IS spokesperson Adnani (2014a) states:

If the people were to commit to all of the rulings of Islam except for example committing to the command forbidding Riba (usury), and they allowed Riba-based banks, then the constitution of such a state is to be considered as a constitution of disbelief, for this action implies that they believe the Shari'ah to be incomplete in perfection and that they lack belief in the perfection of the One that revealed it, Glorious and Exalted is He. It is not a secret that this is *kufr akbar* (major disbelief) which causes one to be expelled from the Religion.

A special role is assigned to the armies of the Muslim countries by IS since they – according to the organisation – protect the ruling elite, which could not govern their countries without the protection of the army. Thereby, the army is declared to fall into the category of *kufr* and is expelled from the religion. According to IS, the consequence is that the armies of Muslim countries have to be fought (Adnani, 2013). In declaring Sunni rulers as well as the whole institution of Muslim armies' unbelievers, IS is making collective *takfir* with members of the respective institutions and does not distinguish between different individuals and their reasons for joining a state institution. All members have to be fought and can legitimately be killed.

Although IS uses *takfir* to exclude Muslim rulers from the *umma* and regularly names them *taghūt* – an Islamic term that refers in the Islamic context to the adversaries of Muhammad and includes the notion of polytheism – *takfir* of Muslim rulers does not take up much space in IS discourse about *takfir*. An explanation for the relatively small role that *takfir* of Muslim rulers plays in IS propaganda is that IS's main territory is based in Iraq and Syria. This means that the organisation's primary enemies are not formal Sunni rulers, but rather Alawites in Syria and elected politicians in Iraq.

*Takfīr against democrats and Islamic parties*

The second Sunni group that IS uses *takfīr* to legitimise violence against it are democrats, Islamic and even Islamist parties. The Syrian regime and elite belong to the Alawite creed. In IS's view, they cannot be excommunicated since they were never part of the Muslim *umma*. Therefore, the organisation mainly uses *takfīr* to defame the regime and Sunni parties that participate in elections in Iraq.

In salafi ideology, democratic elections contradict Islamic principles. In his book 'Democracy is a Religion' (*ad-dīmuqrāṭīya dīn*) widely distributed in jihadi circles, Abu Muhammad al Maqdisi – Zarqawi's former mentor – declares democracy to be a religion that is worshipped by its supporters. According to Maqdisi, this contradicts the Islamic concept of *tawḥīd*, the oneness of God (Maqdisi, 1997). Men-made laws stand beside the law of Allah or even above it, which puts it in the field of polytheism (*shirk*). Therefore, democracy can be seen as a modern form of *kufr*.

IS uses the same explanation to declare the democratically-elected government of Iraq as an unbelieving one:

These deputies and the legislators are idols erected under a dome that submit to an unjust and wrongful law or constitution, which contradicts the Islamic Shari'a and many of the fundamentals of our true religion, and to which they refer in case of disagreements and when enacting and explicating any article or law. It is a religion that contradicts the religion of Allah, which called us to turn matters of disagreements to Allah (Baghdadi, 2010).

Abu Hamza al Muhajir – the former spokesperson of ISI, who was killed together with Abu Omer al Baghdadi in 2010 by an US airstrike – emphasises the role of the Ministry of Justice in promoting secular men-made law. According to him, the Ministry is especially responsible for the fact that people are governed by men-made law rather than the sharia. In this context, he also criticises the courts that apply these laws (Muhajir, 2009). Law made in parliaments by people – and thus democracy – falls under the category of polytheism (*shirk*). For IS, there

is no excuse for polytheism. Not knowing that something is *shirk* or ignorance (*djahl*) – which for al Qaida is an appropriate excuse not to pursue Shi'is or people who participate in democratic elections – is no excuse for the worship of idols for IS (“*Irjāʿ. The Most Dangerous Bidʿah*”, 2015).

In the organisation’s view, it does not matter whether the parties participating in elections are secular or Islamist. The mere fact that a party agrees to make law by having a seat in parliament is seen as a sign of unbelief. Therefore, Islamic and even Islamist parties and their members are also declared unbelievers. Whereas some speeches of the organisation’s leaders deal with the Iraqi party system (especially before the elections in 2010), a greater proportion of IS *takfīr* against Islamic parties deals with the unbelief of the Muslim Brotherhood. IS not only accuses the Brotherhood of *shirk* due to their participation in elections, but also criticises it for cooperating with the West in fighting the mujahidin (Adnani, 2013, 2014a; Baghdadi, 2016; Muhajir, 2007). In Iraq, Islamic parties are particularly criticised by IS, since – according to the organisation – through participating in the political process and elections the Islamic parties help the West and the Shi’i majority in parliament to oppress the Sunni minority (Baghdadi, 2007). Whereas Abu Omer al Baghdadi (2007) declared members of all parties participating in parliament – including the Islamic ones – unbelievers, he explicitly stated that this ruling (*ḥukm*) does not apply for voters of the respective parties as long as the legitimate confutation has not been clarified to them. Seven years later, the organisation became clearly more extreme in this context when IS spokesmen Adnani (2014a) not only declared members of parties and the government ministries unbelievers, but also made *takfīr* on voters for their participation in elections and accused them of apostasy.

#### *Takfīr against bughāt and munāfiqīn*

However, even if Sunnis do not participate in elections, they are still not safe from being accused of unbelief by IS. Taking the prophet as an example, the organisation states that Muhammad was sent by Allah with four swords: one for polytheists (*muṣhrikīn*); one for the

people of the book (*ahl al kitāb*), which means Christians and Jews; one for the hypocrites (*munāfiqīn*); and one for Muslims who rebel against their ruler (*bughāt*) (“Islam is the Religion of the Sword not Pacifism”, 2015). The last two categories allow IS to justify violence against a broad range of people, mainly Sunnis or Sunni tribes who stand in the organisation’s way. In IS’s view, just those are believed to be Muslims who direct their whole life towards Allah. A confession of faith (*shahāda*), fasting (*ṣiyām*) and praying (*ṣalāh*) alone would not constitute a Muslim life (al-Hayat Media Center, 2014, p. 31). Whereas in mainstream Sunni discourse rebellion does not constitute unbelief, *bughāt* are allowed to repent and the *hadd* sentences are not applied (Kraemer, 1980, p. 48ff.), IS allows its followers to use violence against them. An example is the tribes in the area of Diyala that were part of the *ṣaḥwa* movement fighting IS predecessor ISI. Abu Omer al Baghdadi (2008) claims that those tribes would reject Islam and thus legitimises their blood to be spilled:

As for the lives of Ahlu al-Sunnah in Diyala and elsewhere, their blood has no worth. This Front continues to protect and fight side by side with the invaders, and it is truly more Rafida<sup>4</sup> and Magus than al-Rafida themselves.

The organisation clearly sees every rebellion against or confrontation of their organisation or ideology as an act of unbelief. It is allowed to fight people who oppose the organisation or its caliphate:

The Islamic State - on account of what Allah has blessed it with of victory, consolidation and establishing the religion - is regarded as an unquestionable imamah. As such, anyone who rebels against its authority inside its territory is considered a renegade, and it is permissible to fight him after establishing the hujjah against him (i.e. clarifying his error to him with proof) (“The Islamic State is a True Imamah”, 2014, p. 27).

---

<sup>4</sup> Rāfiḍa means rejecters and is a polemic term used to defy Shi’i groups like the Imamates. For more information about this term, see Kohlberg (1995).

Thereby, the enemy images of IS are classified in the pattern of a bipolar world. There is the absolute truth embodied by IS, and complete falsehood, embodied by everyone else (Kinani, 2014). Individuals or groups who disagree with the organisation's 'absolute truth' are declared unbelievers (*kuffār*), which justifies the use of violence against them. As Milton (2014) accurately summarised, IS permits the use of force against broad categories of individuals.

### *Takfīr against jihadis*

Surprisingly, *takfīr* is not only made against local populations and Muslims, but also members of other jihadi organisations, like al Qaida or competing jihadi groups in Syria are declared unbelievers when they criticise IS's actions. Thereby, IS claims to follow the path of al Qaida founder Bin Laden and accuses the organisation of going astray from the right path, which causes a division (*fitna*) between the mujahidin. Addressing al Qaida leader Zawahiri, IS spokesman Adnani (2014a) accuses him of causing a *fitna* because he does not submit to IS:

[...] the fitnah that you were the cause of. Yes, you are the cause of. Yes, you are the cause of it, for you made of yourself and your Qa'idah a laughing stock and a game played in the hand of a young boy, a treacherous evil-doer disloyal to the pledge of allegiance that you did not see, and you left him to play with you like a child playing with a ball. Your prestige has gone and you have lost your history and your glory, so hasten and beware of a bad ending.

IS not only verbally attacks al Qaida leaders directly; moreover, it also makes *takfīr* on other jihadi scholars who take sides for Zawahiri, like Abu Muhammad al Maqdisi (2014a, 2014b) or Abu Qatada al-Filistini (2014a, 2014b), both of whom criticise IS's '*aḳīda*' and support al Qaida in their fight for supremacy.

## Al Qaida's Criticism of IS's Takfir

Whereas IS is using *takfir* against a broad range of Sunni opponents, al Qaida heavily criticises the organisation for doing so. The organisation's criticism is twofold: al Qaida itself sets priority to fighting the so-called far enemy, the US. The aim is to weaken the US first, so that Muslim governments can be overthrown in a second step. Therefore, it criticises IS for not setting priorities, but rather fighting on multiple fronts at the same time. It is a criticism that does not aim at IS ideology, but rather their method (*manhadj*). In addition, al Qaida also accuses IS of leaning towards extremism and thus having a false creed ('*aḳīda*). In this chapter, al Qaida's criticism of IS's *manhadj* and '*aḳīda* regarding *takfir* shall be analysed to show the differences between the two organisations and eventually in their definition of the *umma*.

### *Criticism of IS's manhadj*

Whereas al Qaida agrees on the *takfir* of Muslim rulers who do not rule according to the sharia, as well as democratic parties, it criticises the way in which IS deals with these enemies (*manhadj*).

When Bin Laden declared his war against the US in 1996, he determined a strategy that his organisation adheres to until today: the prioritisation of the far enemy over the near enemy. The idea behind this prioritisation is that should the US withdraw from the Arab world and stop supporting the pro-Western regimes in the Muslim world, the organisation would be able to overthrow these regimes more easily (Steinberg, 2005). To date, this prioritisation of the far enemy has not changed. Zawahiri (2013a) still adheres to the strategy of targeting the US first to overthrow Muslim regimes:

The purpose of targeting America is to exhaust her and bleed her to death, so that it meets the fate of the former Soviet Union and collapses under its own weight as a result of its military, human, and financial losses. Consequently, its grip on our lands will weaken and its allies will begin to fall one after another.

This strategy of targeting the US first does not alter the idea of Arab regimes and rulers being unbelievers. Al Qaida still makes *takfir* on those regimes. The first reason for them making *takfir* is – like for IS – the implementation of law that does not comply with the sharia by Arab regimes. Additionally, the organisation accuses the rulers of putting themselves and their laws in a position next to God:

This is the important reality that the rulers manipulate, even if they use Islam as a cover, particularly in some countries, where they assigned an army of *ulema*, preachers, writers, and the entire mass media for about a century to exaggerate the meaning of obedience to the ruler, deviating from the restrictions to this concept as stipulated in God's religion. Therefore, the ruler became an idol to be worshipped instead of God [...] (Bin Laden, 2004, p. 227)

The second reason for declaring the Arab regimes unbelievers is their support of and submission to the US. An example often used by Bin Laden and still used by Zawahiri today is that Arab countries allowed the US to open military bases in their land, from which the US attacked other Muslim countries like Afghanistan or Syria. “This is obvious support for the infidels [...] and a cardinal sin that renders one an infidel” (Bin Laden, 2004, p. 223).

The Islamic concept behind these accusations is that of loyalty and disavowal (*walā' wa-l barā'*), which regulates social interactions with fellow Muslims as well as non-Muslims. There should be loyalty and love for the sake of Allah for every Muslim, whereas non-Muslims should be disavowed from. Al Qaida sees a clear breach of this concept when Muslim rulers collaborate with the US or take them as allies. However, unlike IS – which calls on its supporters to fight the near enemy and everyone working for them – al Qaida does not derive any current consequences from making *takfir* on the Muslim regimes. Consequences are delayed until the US would be sufficiently weak that it could no longer support local regimes. The consequence of *takfir* – fighting the regimes and using violence against them – will come later:

Once the American enemy has been defeated, our next step would be targeting the region's leaders who had been the pillars of support for that American hegemony. [...] Once those leaders have been defeated, God willing our next step will be building our Muslim state. (Bin Laden, n.d.)

The same logic applies for Muslim parties participating in elections. The organisation uses the same arguments for making *takfir* on elected parliaments as IS does:

It being "democratic" means that sovereignty is derived from the wishes of the majority, without regards to any standard, morality or creed. A democratic government must be secular, or in other words atheist, because governance and authority is not the sole right of Allah Most High, but rather subject to the desire of the majority (Zawahiri, 2011).

However, even though al Qaida agrees with IS on the unbelief of democratic elections because they replace God's law with men-made law, the former's use of *takfir* does not constitute the consequence of using violence against those parties. Again, the reason is that the far enemy – who (to some degree) supports parliamentary elections in the region – has to be weakened first for jihadists to overthrow the regimes.

Although IS makes *takfir* on Islamic regimes and parties and also derives lethal consequences from their *takfir* and thus are fighting on multiple fronts, there remains a prioritisation of enemies taking place. Before fighting Sunni apostates, IS spokesperson Adnani (2014b) calls on the organisation's supporters in the Arab countries to fight the Shia first:

The mujahidin realized the Rafidah are a more dangerous enemy that threaten Islam and Muslims, and a pickaxe that destroys the pillars of Islam, and that the Islamic State took upon itself the fighting of the Rafidah everywhere.



Therefore, the *manhadj* of the two organisations not only differ in their consequences of *takfīr*, but also in their prioritisation of who should be fought first.

#### *Criticism of IS's 'akīda*

In addition to criticism of IS's methods, al Qaida also accuses IS of having a wrong understanding of Islam. The organisation's leader Zawahiri (n.d.) criticises IS for using *takfīr* as they please:

[...] their Takfeer is political and an opportunistic one that seeks benefits. And the one who agrees with them or in whom they find benefit in being affiliated with, they praise him, rather they repeatedly ask him to mention them and praise them, in order to gain status amongst the people by means of that. And the one who opposes them, they lie about him and slander him and make Takfeer on him, following the path of Takfeer for (justifying) explosion, elimination and tyranny.

For al Qaida, using *takfīr* mainly to support one's own group and undermine others who stand in their way means that IS is leaning towards extremism. This leads to the unlawful spilling of Muslim blood and eventually to a division of the mujahedin and the Muslims.

#### *The reproach of extremism and exaggeration (ghulū)*

When it comes to *takfīr*, al Qaida accuses IS of being too extreme. The organisation would make *takfīr* on anyone who is unwilling to submit to the organisation and live according to their rules. This is even the case for people whom al Qaida would not see as unbelievers, but as fellow Muslims who can be excused for committing minor sins.

However they [IS] make Takfeer on the people by fabricating and by lying and for actions which are not Kufr, rather even for acts of obedience and for adherence to the Book and to the Sunnah (Zawahiri, n.d.).

Regarding IS's excessive use of *takfīr*, al Qaida often compares them to the early Khawarij. This group emerged after the death of the prophet Muhammad and is famous for their extremism in *takfīr* of people who commit even minor sins. In an attempt to defame IS, al Qaida accuses the organisation of being even worse than the Khawarij (Zawahiri, 2016a; Zawahiri, n.d.). One main reason that al Qaida's current leader Zawahiri (n.d.) gives for blaming IS of being more extremist than the early Khawarij is that the Khawarij made *takfīr* on sinners, but that IS would even make up sins when they want to legitimise the killing of someone:

These people [i.e. the Khawarij] used to claim that they were upon the methodology of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah and that they do not make Takfeer for sins, just like the claims of Baghdadi's group who are claiming that they are upon the methodology of Ahlus Sunnah. However they make Takfeer on the people by fabricating and by lying and for actions which are not Kufr, rather even for acts of obedience and for adherence to the Book and to the Sunnah.

This means that IS makes *takfīr* on people who – for al Qaida – belong to the Muslim *umma* and adhere to Islam. Al Qaida accuses IS supporters of making up sins that lead to *takfīr* to fight Sunnis who are not on their side. For al Qaida, people who commit sins are not necessarily to be excluded from the community of believers. Therefore, the consequence of IS's *takfīr* of a broad range of its opponents through the lens of al Qaida is an unlawful spilling of Muslim blood.

#### *The reproach of the unlawful spilling of Muslim blood*

The concept of *tatarrus* – the lawful spilling of Muslim blood – in mainstream Muslim discourse is a discussion about when Muslims are allowed to be killed, when the enemy uses them as a human shield (Landau-Tasseron, 2006).<sup>5</sup> In jihadi discourse, the definition of *tatarrus* deviates from the mainstream discourse. Nearly every killing of a Muslim – whether

---

<sup>5</sup> Some Muslim scholars also use the concept for non-Muslim non-combatants.

because someone (falsely) made *takfīr* on a Muslim or when Muslims are killed in an attack on the enemy – falls into the category of *tatarrus* and jihadi groups are quick to discuss the lawfulness of the spilling of Muslim blood. In recent years, owing to IS's excessive use of *takfīr* the discourse has changed into one about who is a rightful Muslim and thus whose blood is not allowed to be spilled.

Al Qaida accuses IS of unlawfully spilling Muslim blood. As already mentioned, the point of departure for the criticism is IS's excessive use of *takfīr*, which results in the killing of people who al Qaida consider as Muslims. Therefore, when the fight between the Nuṣra Front and ISIS in Syria escalated in 2013, Zawahiri issued al Qaida's guidelines for Jihad. In them, he explicitly stated that the two groups should “refrain from harming Muslims by explosions, killing, kidnapping or destroying their wealth or property.” Moreover, one should “refrain from targeting enemies in mosques, markets and gatherings, where they mix with Muslims or with those who do not fight us.” Whereas the second guideline falls into the classical category of *tatarrus*, namely the killing of Muslims as casualties when targeting an enemy, the first one includes the direct targeting of people who – according to Zawahiri – belong to the *umma*.

In addition to criticising the spilling of ordinary Muslim's blood, Zawahiri (2016b) also heavily criticises the killing of members of rival mujahidin groups:

And then, he [Baghdadi, the leader of IS] sends his assassin groups to explode the heads of the monotheist Mujahideen [sic!] and the best of them, those who are striving to rule by the Sharia and striving to establish the Khilafa that is upon the Prophetic methodology, while many of them have been on the battlefields of Jihad even before them for decades, and they have neither changed nor compromised.

The fight for supremacy and over the spilling of blood goes so far that even jihadis who are not aligned to either of the two organisations interfere in the fight between al Qaida and IS. Thereby, almost all important and independent jihadis – like al Maqdisi or Abu Qatada –

support al Qaida in criticising IS extremism and its spilling of Muslim, and even mujahidin blood:

And what the group the “State” has done is shifting away the current rivalry between it and its opponent over the leadership of the Jihad groups – i.e the Al Qaida’s group – towards explicit blood and to give this spilling of impermissible blood a legal characteristic where we will find the fiqh of Bughaat (rebels) as has been announced by the deeply ignorant Adnani in this statement of his, where he warned those who break the bondage of obedience, that its verdict is blood and killing (Filistini, 2014a).

Maqdisi (2014c) clearly distances himself from the organisation, whose predecessor was founded by his former student Zarqawi, and accuses them of a wrong creed and exaggeration:

[...] I announce, here, that Tandheem al-Dawlah fil-‘Iraq wal-Shaam, is a deviant organisation from the path of truth, [they are] aggressors against the Mujahideen. They lean towards ghuluw. They have become embroiled in the spilling of unlawful blood, the sequestration of their wealth, war booty, and [the] regions which they have liberated from the [Asaad] regime, [This group] has besmirched the name of Jihad and the elite Mujahideen.<sup>6</sup>

As one can see from the interference of jihadis who are not members of either of the two organisations, the fight for supremacy of the jihadi landscape not only takes place between the two organisations, but also in the wider jihadi scene. Jihadis worldwide take sides in the fight and the jihadis worldwide are divided over which organisation they support.

#### *The reproach of splitting the Muslim community (fitna)*

The division (*fitna*) of the jihadis is something that the two organisations accuse each other of being the cause of. With IS’s proclamation of the caliphate and their call for other

---

<sup>6</sup> Insertions are from the original document.

jihadi and Islamist organisations to submit to the caliphate and swear an oath of allegiance (*bay'at*) to its leader Baghdadi, Zawahiri (2016b) states that they would divide the Muslims:

[...] calling people towards the khilafa of detonations and explosions and blowing up things will lead to igniting strife amongst the Mujahidin, between those who follow the khalifa of explosions and detonations and blowups, who consider the rest of the Mujahidin to have no legitimacy, saying that they are Bughaat (transgressors, rebels) and sometimes even apostates, and between those who do not accept his domination, who strive to establish the Khilafa upon the Prophetic methodology. And we have seen its disaster in the fighting amongst the Mujahidin in Shaam, which is threatening to destroy the Jihad, while the first and foremost benefactor would be the enemies of Islam.

For al Qaida, the cause of the *fitna* is not only IS's proclamation of the caliphate, but also them making *takfir* on a broad range of individuals and the leaders of al Qaida themselves (Zawahiri 2016a, 2016b, n.d.).

Thus, these poor souls are causing devastation for the Jihadi movement, and causing chaos inside it, with the movement being destroyed by the very hands of those who claim to belong to it, while the enemies of Islam watch this disaster and rejoice (Zawahiri 2016b).

As mentioned above, IS on the other side accuses al Qaida of splitting the ranks of the mujahidin by not submitting to its caliphate (Adnani, 2014a, 2014c).

### **A Different Definition of the Umma?**

As al Qaida's criticism of IS's use of *takfir* given above shows, there is a difference in the two organisations' ideology (*'akīda*) and methodology (*manhadj*) regarding the issue of

---

*takfir*. Whereas IS uses *takfir* against a broad range of opponents and excludes people from Islam even for minor sins, al Qaida does not make *takfir* on the majority of Muslims.

Taking a look at Zawahiri's guidelines for jihad, the importance of not harming the Muslim *umma* for al Qaida becomes clear. Zawahiri (2013a) clearly states that every aggression against Muslims should be avoided. Furthermore, every attack should be avoided when there is only a minimal chance of Muslims getting hurt. Moreover, other members of the al Qaida leadership state that it is absolutely forbidden to spill Muslim blood and that operations would only be legitimate if one can be certain that there would be no Muslim casualties (Libi, 2011).

By contrast, IS criticises Zawahiri for his guidelines and accuses al Qaida of not following the right *manhadj* anymore. In response to al Qaida's criticism that IS's *takfir* would be too excessive and the organisation would lean towards extremism, IS criticises the organisation for not differentiating between individuals who claim to be Muslims. For example, IS spokesperson Adnani (2014c) states that al Qaida would not make a difference between the mujahidin, members of the *shahwa* movement and muggers (*mukhāribīn*) and would include them all in the *umma*. On the contrary, IS also excludes Sunnis from the *umma* who do not commit a nullifier themselves but fail to condemn others who are sinners in the organisation's view.<sup>7</sup>

Whereas al Qaida wants to protect Sunnis under all circumstances, Sunnis who oppose IS are regularly declared legitimate targets by IS through using *takfir*. "For al-Qa'ida, its use of violence to achieve its goals was a tool to be used judiciously against a relatively narrow subset of enemies, whereas for the IS, violence has been unleashed broadly against a wide range of enemies, including a wide range of Muslims" (Milton, 2014, p. 31). A broad range of people are excluded from the *umma* by IS, whereas al Qaida includes most Sunnis in the *umma*. This points to the fact that the two organisations have different definitions of the *umma* and thus also different populations that they claim to represent.

---

<sup>7</sup> The organisation later retracted the ruling that allowed *takfir* of Sunnis who do not condemn sinners (Joscelyn, 2017). Nevertheless, it did not change its stance on *takfir* of the enemy categories mentioned in this paper.

## Conclusion

The aim of this paper has been to highlight one of the most important ideological differences between two organisations that are often lumped together as extremist salafī jihadi groups, namely the use of *takfīr* as a way to legitimise the targeting of Sunni Muslims. Whereas al Qaida and IS agree on the unbelief (*kufr*) of Arab regimes in the Middle East and democratic parties, they differ in their consequences of *takfīr*. While IS is fighting on multiple fronts and declares members of the respective regimes and parties as legitimate targets, al Qaida wants to focus on weakening the US first and thus restrains from targeting apostates if they do not fight the mujahidin first. Moreover, the organisation criticises IS's excessive use of *takfīr* against Sunnis who oppose the idea of an Islamic State. IS legitimises targeting Sunnis through classifying them as *bughāt* or *munāfiqīn* and consequently excluding them from the *umma*. On the other hand, al Qaida is keen on having a good reputation and does not want to alienate the Muslim society. Therefore, it criticises IS for leaning towards extremism and exaggeration (*ghulū*). In the organisation's view, IS is spilling unlawful Muslim blood. This extremism and targeting of Muslims would lead to a separation of the Muslims (*fitna*). Concluding from al Qaida's criticism of IS's use of *takfīr*, one can see a different definition of the *umma* that the two organisations follow. For al Qaida, a broad range of people belong to the *umma*, while for IS only those Sunnis who totally submit to their ideology.

An understanding of the differing ideologies of the organisations is a necessary prerequisite for any deradicalisation program. Additional research is needed on which individuals are attracted by which organisation to tailor deradicalisation programs to the needs of the target group.

## References

- Adnani, A. M. (2013). *Pacifism is the religion of whom?*. Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/PacifismIsTheReligionOfWhom> [16 December 2017]
- Adnani, A. M. (2014a). *Apologies Amir of al-Qaidah*. Retrieved from <http://justpaste.it/jppdf/adn4> [10 November 2017]
- Adnani, A.M. (2014b). *The Scout doesn't lie to its People*. Retrieved from <https://ia902707.us.archive.org/15/items/TheScoutDoesntLieToHisPeople/The%20Scout%20doesn't%20Lie%20to%20his%20People.pdf> [10 November 2017]
- Adnani, A.M. (2014c). *This is not our Methodology nor will it ever be*. Retrieved from <https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2014/04/shaykh-abc5ab-mue1b8a5ammad-al-e28098adnc481nc4ab-al-shc481mc4ab-22-this-is-not-our-manhaj-nor-will-it-ever-be22-en.pdf> [15 October 2017]
- Al-Hayat Media Center (2014). *Dabiq Issue 1. The Return of the Khilafah*. Retrieved from <https://clarionproject.org/docs/isis-islamc-state-magazine-Issue-1-the-return-of-khilafah.pdf> [4 November 2017]
- Baehr, D. (2009). *Kontinuität und Wandel in der Ideologie des Jihadi-Salafismus. Eine ideentheoretische Analyse der Schriften von Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, Abu Mohammad al-Maqdisi und Abu Bakr Naji*. Bonn: Boubier
- Baghdadi, A. O. (2007). *I am on clear proof of my Lord*. Retrieved from [https://archive.org/details/say\\_i\\_am\\_aware\\_of\\_my\\_lord](https://archive.org/details/say_i_am_aware_of_my_lord) [10 November 2017]
- Baghdadi, A. O. (2008). *The Solid Cemented Structure*. Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/TheSolidCementedStructure> [8 November 2017]
- Baghdadi, A. O. (2010). *The Political and Religious Crime of Elections and Our Obligation Towards It*. Retrieved from <https://ia800503.us.archive.org/14/items/ThePoliticalAndReligiousCrimeOfElectionsAndOurObligationTowardsIt/The%20Political%20and%20Religious%20Crime%20of%20Elections%20and%20Our%20Obligation%20Towards%20It.pdf> [10 November 2017]
- Baghdadi, A. B. (2013a). *The Announcement of The Islamic State of Iraq and Shaam*. Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/AnnmcmentOfIslamicStateDawla> [10 November 2017]



- 
- Baghdadi, A. B. (2013b). *Bāḳiya fī-l- 'irāq wa-sh-shām*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IC7hKaci6fk&feature=youtu.be> [10 November 2017]
- Baghdadi, A. B. (2016). *This is what Allah and His messenger promised us*. Retrieved from <https://justpaste.it/promiseofAllah> [8 November 2017]
- Bin Laden, U. (n.d.). Letter to al-Libi. Retrieved from <https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Letter-from-UBL-to-Atiyatullah-Al-Libi-4-Translation.pdf> [17 October 2014]
- Bin Laden, U. (2004). Resist the New Rome. In Lawrence, B. (ed.). *Messages to the World. The statements of Usama Bin Laden* (p. 212-232). London & New York: Verso
- Bin Laden, U. (1996). Erklärung des Heiligen Krieges gegen die Amerikaner, die das Land der beiden heiligen Stätten besetzen. In Kepel, G. & Milelli, J.-P. (ed). *Al-Qaida. Texte des Terrors* (p. 67-71). Munich: Piper
- Bunzel, C. (2015). *From Paper State to Caliphate. The Ideology of the Islamic State*. Brookings Center for Middle East Policy Analysis Paper, 19. Retrieved from <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2015/03/ideology-of-islamic-state> [10 November 2017]
- Filistini, A. Q. (2014a). *The Cloak of the Khilafa*. Retrieved from <https://almuwahideenmedia.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/thecloakofthekhalifa.pdf> [10 November 2017]
- Filistini, A.Q. (2014b). *Message to the People of Jihad and those who Love Jihad*. Retrieved from <https://alminara.wordpress.com/2015/04/16/shaykh-abu-qatada-al-filistini-message-to-the-people-of-jihad-and-those-who-love-jihad/> [8 November 2017]
- Fishman, B. & Felter, J. (2007). *Al-Qa`ida`s Foreign Fighters in Iraq. A First Look at the Sinjar Records*. Combating Terrorism Center at West Point. Retrieved from <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/al-qaidas-foreign-fighters-in-iraq-a-first-look-at-the-sinjar-records> [18 October 2017]
- al Furqan Media (2012). *The Expedition of the Prisoners #1*. Retrieved from <http://www.ansar1.info/showthread.php?p=139598#post139598> [8 March 2015]
- Hartung, J.-P. (2013). *A System of Life: Mawdūdī and the Ideologisation of Islam*. London & New York: Hurst

Hegghammer, T. (2009). Jihadi-Salafis or Revolutionaries? On Religion and Politics in the Study of Militant Islamism. In Meijer, R. (ed.). *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*. London & New York: Hurst

Hunwick, J.O. (1999). Takfir. In Bearman, P., Bianquis, T., Bosworth, C.E & van Donzel, E. (ed.). *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*. X (p. 122). Leiden: Brill

International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism (2017). *ISIS Defectors Speak – Videos*. Retrieved from <http://www.icsve.org/isis-defectors-speak-videos/> [10 November 2017]

“Irjā’. The Most Dangerous Bid’ah (and its Effect on the Jihād in Shām)” (2015). In al-Hayat Media Center (ed.). *Dabiq Issue 8. Shari’ah alone will rule Africa* (p. S. 39-56). Retrieved from <https://clarionproject.org/docs/isis-isil-islamic-state-magazine-issue+8-sharia-alone-will-rule-africa.pdf> [10 November 2017]

“Islam is the Religion of the Sword not Pacifism” (2015). In al-Hayat Media Center (ed.). *Dabiq Issue 7. From Hypocrisy to Apostasy* (p. 20-24). Retrieved from <https://clarionproject.org/docs/islamic-state-dabiq-magazine-issue-7-from-hypocrisy-to-apostasy.pdf> [8 November 2017]

Jawad, S. (2013). *The Iraqi Constitution. Structural Flaws and Political Implications*. LSE Middle East Centre Paper Series, 1. Retrieved from <http://www.lse.ac.uk/middleEastCentre/publications/Paper-Series/Iraqi-Constitution.aspx> [10 August 2014]

Joscelyn, T. (2017). *Islamic State rescinds one of its most problematic religious rulings*. FDD’s Long War Journal. Retrieved from <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/09/islamic-state-rescinds-one-of-its-most-problematic-religious-rulings.php> [15 December 2017]

Kinani, A.A. (2014). It’s Either the Islamic State or The Flood. In al-Hayat Media Center (ed.). *Dabiq 2. The Flood* (p. 5-11). Retrieved from <https://clarionproject.org/docs/isis-isil-islamic-state-magazine-Issue-2-the-flood.pdf> [8 November 2017]

Kohlberg, E. (1995). al-Rāfiḍa. In Bearman, P., Bianquis, T., Bosworth, C.E & van Donzel, E. (ed.). *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*. VIII (p. 386b-389a). Leiden: Brill

Kraemer, J. L. (1980). Apostates, Rebels, and Brigands. *Israel Oriental Studies*, 10, p. 34-73

Landau-Tasserou, E. (2006). „Non-Combatants“ in Muslim Legal Thought. Washington DC: Hudson Institute. Retrieved from [https://www.hudson.org/content/researchattachments/attachment/1116/20061226\\_noncombatantsfinal.pdf](https://www.hudson.org/content/researchattachments/attachment/1116/20061226_noncombatantsfinal.pdf) [10 November 2017]

Lewis, B. (2002). *Die politische Sprache des Islam*. Hamburg: Europäische Verlagsanstalt

Libi, A. Y. (2011). *The Importance of the Sanctity of Muslim Blood*. Retrieved from <https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/ae1b9adc4abyyatullah-abc5ab-abd-ar-ae1b8a5man-maximizing-the-sanctity-of-muslim-blood.pdf> [26 December 2014]

Lister, C. (2014). *Profiling the Islamic State*. Brookings Doha Center Analysis Paper, 13. Retrieved from <http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports2/2014/12/profiling-islamic-state-lister> [5 November 2017]

Maǧlis shūrā al-mudǧahidīn (2006). *Bayān ta'sīs „muǧlis shūrā al-mudǧahidīn“*. Retrieved from <https://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=5cqkqf0o> [10 September 2011]

Maqdisi, A. M. (1997). *This is our `Aqidāh*. Retrieved from [https://ia802605.us.archive.org/26/items/ThisIsOuraqidah-AbiMuhammadAl-maqdisi/our\\_aqeedah.pdf](https://ia802605.us.archive.org/26/items/ThisIsOuraqidah-AbiMuhammadAl-maqdisi/our_aqeedah.pdf) [3 September 2014]

Maqdisi, A. M. (2014a). *On the Caliphate*. Retrieved from <https://justpaste.it/g7x6> [16 April 2016]

Maqdisi, A. M. (2014b). *This is some of what I Have and Not All of It*. Retrieved from <https://justpaste.it/Maqdisi-Khilafa-ISIS> [8 November 2017]

Maqdisi, A. M. (2014c). *A Call to the Ummah & Mujahideen*. Retrieved from <http://justpaste.it/jppdf/Maqdisi-ISIS> [7 October 2017]

Milton, D. (2014). Goals and Methods. Comparing Three Militant Groups. In Combating Terrorism Center at West Point (ed.). *The Group That Calls Itself a State. Understanding the Evolution and Challenges of the Islamic State*. Retrieved from <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-group-that-calls-itself-a-state-understanding-the-evolution-and-challenges-of-the-islamic-state> [10 November 2017]

Muhajir, A.H. (2007). *Say, Die in Your Rage*. Retrieved from [https://archive.org/details/SayDieInYourRage\\_201503](https://archive.org/details/SayDieInYourRage_201503) [3 September 2017]

- 
- Muhajir, A. H. (2009). *A Message to the Knights of Baghdad*. Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/AMessageToTheKnightsOfBaghdad> [3 September 2017]
- Nelson, R., Sanderson, T., Bagia, A., Bodurian, B. & Gordon, D. (2011). *A Threat Transformed. Al Qaeda and Associated Movements in 2011*. Center for Strategic and International Studies. Retrieved from <https://csis.org/publication/threat-transformed> [27 October 2016]
- Neumann, P. (2015). *Foreign fighter total in Syria/Iraq now exceeds 20,000; surpasses Afghanistan conflict in the 1980s*. International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence. Retrieved from <http://icsr.info/2015/01/foreign-fighter-total-syriairaq-now-exceeds-20000-surpasses-afghanistan-conflict-1980s/> [10 November 2017]
- Nedza, J. (2014). «Salafismus» - Überlegungen zur Schärfung einer Analysekatgorie. In Said, B. T. & Fouad, H. (ed.). *Salafismus. Auf der Suche nach dem wahren Islam* (p. 80-105). Bonn: Herder
- Phillips, N. & Hardy, C. (2002): *Discourse Analysis. Investigating Processes of Social Construction*. London: Sage Publications
- Steinberg, G. (2005). *Der nahe und der ferne Feind. Die Netzwerke des islamistischen Terrorismus*. Munich: C.H. Beck
- Steinberg, G. (2015). *Kalifat des Schreckens. IS und die Bedrohung durch den islamistischen Terror*. Munich: Knaur
- Stern, J. & Berger, J. M. (2015). *ISIS. The State of Terror*. London: William Collins
- Tanzīm kā`ida al ḍjihād. (2014). *Bayān bi-sha`n `alāka ḍjamā`a kā`ida al ḍjihād bi-ḍjamā`a (ad-dawla al islāmiyya fī-l-`irāq wa-sh-shām)*. Retrieved from <http://justpaste.it/ea9k> [7 March 2015]
- Tawhīd wa-l-ḍjihād. (u.d.). *Riyāḥ an-naṣr*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xEHP7D11H0> [17 November 2014]
- “The Islamic State is a True Imamah” (2014). In Al-Hayat Media Center (ed.). *Dabiq Issue 1. The Return of the Khilafah* (p.27-29). Retrieved from <https://clarionproject.org/docs/isis-islamic-state-magazine-Issue-1-the-return-of-khilafah.pdf> [10 November 2017]
- Weiss, M. & Hassan, H. (2015). *ISIS. Inside the Army of Terror*. New York: Regan Arts
- Wichmann, P. (2014). *Al-Qaida und der globale Ḍjihad*. Wiesbaden: Springer

Zarqawi, A. M. (u.d.). Brief an Bin Laden und al-Zawahiri. In G. Kepel & Milelli, J.-P. (ed.). (2006). *Al-Qaida. Texte des Terrors* (p. 458-481). Munich: Piper

Zawahiri, A. (2005). *Letter to Zarqawi*. Retrieved from <https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Zawahiris-Letter-to-Zarqawi-Translation.pdf> [10 January 2015]

Zawahiri, A. (2011). A Message of Hope and Glad Tidings to Our Fellow Muslims in Egypt (1). Retrieved from <https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/ayman-ae1ba93-e1ba93awc481hirc4ab-e2809cfirst-installment-of-a-message-of-hope-and-glad-tidings-to-our-people-in-egypte2809d-en.pdf> [26 July 2017]

Zawahiri, A. (2013a). *General Guidelines for Jihad*. Retrieved from <https://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/dr-ayman-al-e1ba93awc481hirc4ab-22general-guidelines-for-the-work-of-a-jihc481dc4ab22-en.pdf> [28 October 2014]

Zawahiri, A. (2013b). *Letter to Jaulani and Baghdadi*. Retrieved from <https://s3.amazonaws.com/s3.documentcloud.org/documents/710586/ayman-zawahiri.pdf> [28 October 2014]

Zawahiri, A. (2016a). *Messages to a Victorious Nation. Part 2: Do not be divided*. Retrieved from <https://almuwahideenmedia.wordpress.com/2017/01/22/brief-messages-to-a-victorious-nation-part-2-do-not-be-divided/> [10 November 2017]

Zawahiri, A. (2016b). *The Islamic Spring. Part 4*. Retrieved from <https://justpaste.it/vmkh> [10 November 2017]

Zawahiri, A. (n.d.). *Sham – A Trust Upon Your Necks*. Retrieved from <https://almuwahideenmedia.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/shaamtrust.pdf> [28 July 2017]

Zelin, A. (2014). *The War between ISIS and al-Qaeda for Supremacy of the Global Jihadist Movement*. The Washington Institute for Near East Policy Research Notes, 20. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-war-between-isis-and-al-qaeda-for-supremacy-of-the-global-jihadist> [15 August 2015]

### About the JD Journal for Deradicalization

The JD Journal for Deradicalization is the world's only peer reviewed periodical for the theory and practice of deradicalization with a wide international audience. Named an [“essential journal of our times”](#) (Cheryl LaGuardia, Harvard University) the JD's editorial board of expert advisors includes some of the most renowned scholars in the field of deradicalization studies, such as Prof. Dr. John G. Horgan (Georgia State University); Prof. Dr. Tore Bjørge (Norwegian Police University College); Prof. Dr. Mark Dechesne (Leiden University); Prof. Dr. Cynthia Miller-Idriss (American University Washington); Prof. Dr. Marco Lombardi, (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Milano); Dr. Paul Jackson (University of Northampton); Professor Michael Freeden, (University of Nottingham); Professor Hamed El-Sa'id (Manchester Metropolitan University); Prof. Sadeq Rahimi (University of Saskatchewan, Harvard Medical School), Dr. Omar Ashour (University of Exeter), Prof. Neil Ferguson (Liverpool Hope University), Prof. Sarah Marsden (Lancaster University), Dr. Kurt Braddock (Pennsylvania State University), Dr. Michael J. Williams (Georgia State University), and Aaron Y. Zelin (Washington Institute for Near East Policy)

For more information please see: [www.journal-derad.com](http://www.journal-derad.com)

Twitter: @JD\_JournalDerad

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/deradicalisation](http://www.facebook.com/deradicalisation)

The JD Journal for Deradicalization is a proud member of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).

ISSN: 2363-9849

Editors in Chief: Daniel Koehler, Tine Hutzler